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Agricultural Reforms in Modern Telangana: A Historical Study

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ABSTRACT

Telangana is the youngest state among the Indian states. It has undergone a significant transformation in recent years. More precisely, since 2014, there has been a drastic change in its agriculture. This study examines the agricultural reforms administered in Telangana. It reveals the evolution of policies from the post-formation of the state to the present day. The paper highlights the impact of policies and reforms on agricultural productivity and farmer welfare. Initiatives like the Rythu Bandhu Scheme and Rythu Bima Scheme have beenanalysed vividly. Besides, the research explores the challenges faced by farmers, including climate change, water scarcity, and market fluctuations. This research paper provides valuable input into the examination of historical contexts and the impact of agricultural reforms on the Telangana agriculture sector development. The inferences suggest, the progress has been made and further efforts needed to make sure sustainability and fair agrarian development. This study adds to agriculture policy making and understanding it and its efforts on rural communities in Telangana.

Keywords: Agricultural Reforms, Telangana Rythu Bandhu Scheme, Sustainable Agriculture, Rural Development, Farmer Welfare.

INTRODUCTION

The research question is what historical factors shaped agricultural reforms in modern Telangana, and how have these reforms impacted the state's agrarian structure and rural economy? It turned out to be the guide source for writing this research paper.

Telangana rose as a new state among the Indian states on 02nd June 2014, with a fight for separation. Since its formation, the reformations have taken place in almost all the sectors of the state. The historical contexts in the state agriculture reforms in modern Telangana shaped the agricultural policies that were formed in it. It has a long history, from the Zamindar and Jagirdar to modern cultivation. A system of autocracy to democratic rule is a fundamental transformation in agriculture. This shift is a part of the reformation in land ownership from Zamindar to an ordinary peasant. This move helped distribute 173 million acres of land and brought 20 million Kaulu Farmers into direct relationship with the state.

Agricultural reforms in the historical context of Telangana have a complex and multifaceted nature. There are several factors, including colonialism, post-colonialism, and globalization, that have significantly affected the states' agricultural structure. An understanding of the evolution of agricultural reforms is needed for effective agricultural policies and the implementation of these policies. These promote sustainable agricultural development and improve farmers' living conditions.

The key features of land reforms included the abolition of intermediaries, land ceilings, tenancy legislation and cooperative farming. Exploitation has effectively been checkedbyeliminating intermediaries andincreasing state cultivator interaction. The Land Ceiling Act (Act, 1973) imposed limits on landholding to reduce inequality, but varying levels and exemptions led to its effective implementation. The tenancy legislation paved the way for regulated rents and provided tenure security, but it has had poor implementation and an inherent weakness that limited its effect. The cooperative farming has implementation limitations, so it is ineffective.

The agrarian structure has several challenges, including ineffective policy implementation and loopholes. For effective implementation of policies and strategies, lots of efforts and motivation of the farmers from the grassroots level are required, since most of the agricultural system is still relying on traditional practices only. The historical context of the agrarian reforms in Telangana provides a valuable insight into the complexities of land reforms and their ongoing relevance in modern times.

The study explores the context of historical agricultural reform in Telangana. It explores the key policies, initiatives and challenges. These have shaped the state's agrarian structure. The farming reforms evolution analysis seeks to identify lessons learned and best practices that inform future policy decisions and promote sustainable agricultural development in Telangana.

The literature review on agricultural reforms in modern Telangana has revealed a few facts that need to be considered. It has a great historical context, and the reforms have been shaped from the abolition of the Zamindari and Jagidari systems. A single contact cultivation with the government has formed (Krishnaiah, 2018). This shift brought several reforms in land reform initiatives. It has paved the way for land distribution to the landless, people experiencing poverty and Kaulu farmers.

The agricultural reforms have features like the land revenue, jagirdar, and tenancy legislation. The land revenue system was the system that was in practice during the Mughal period (Krishnaiah, 2018). It was the same system adopted by the Nizam Ali Khan (1734-1803). The Jagirdar system is a part of the land tenure system. It allowed large landowners to retain significant holdings. It is often done through a few loopholes. Tenancy legislation of land provides security of tenure and rent to the land owner. However, it has the drawbacks of poor implementation, inherent weakness, and limited effectiveness.

Agricultural Reforms Impact

The agricultural reforms benefit the farmer in two ways. They are one increased cultivation and reduce the farmer's distress. The cultivated land has been increasing, and agricultural methods have improved. The area cultivated has advanced by 84% from 1881 figures, resulting in a population increase of 36% (S. Krishnaiah). Similarly, the farmer's distress had come down, despite efforts, rural Telangana faces distress, with declining real profitability in farming, poverty, and exploitation (V. Sneha, Aldas Janaiah, and V. V. D. Manisha).

Recent studies have revealed several ground-level facts about Telangana's modern agrarian practices. The study on the changing scenario of rural economy in Telangana found a decline in actual cultivators and an increase in tenant farmers between 2009 and 2019 (V. Sneha, Aldas Janaiah, and V. V. D. Manisha).

The research on yield gap analysis of maize in Telangana highlighted the need for sustainable agricultural practices (D. Srinvasa Reddy et al.).

The research question what historical factors shaped agricultural reforms in modern Telangana, and how have these reforms impacted the state's agrarian structure and rural economy? Adoptsa historical research approach to understand the evolution of agricultural reforms in Telangana and their effects on the state's agricultural sector. By examining these reforms' historical context and impact, researchers can identify lessons learned and best practices to inform future policy decisions.

The historical factors shaping agriculture reforms in modern Telangana, more specifically, are Rythu Bandhu—Historical Factors Shaping Agricultural Reforms in Modern Telangana and the Impact of Rythu Bandhu. The state'sagricultural reforms have been shaped by its complex history, including the abolition of intermediaries like Zamindars and Jagirdars. A key initiative that has impacted the state's agrarian structure and rural economy is the Rythu Bandhu scheme. It is the pioneering farmer benefit program launched in 2018-19.

The main objectives of this scheme are

- Financial support to the farmers
- Preventing debt

Rythu Bandu scheme provides financial support to farmers for agricultural and horticultural crops, offering grants of Rs. 10,000 per acre per season in a year. The primary focus of this scheme is to prevent farmers from accumulating debt and enhance agricultural productivity. It has a positive impact. The studies revealthat it has positively impacted farmers, with 96% of farmers following mono-cropping patterns and investing in inputs like seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides.

The scheme has had a positive impact by increasing productivity. The Rythu Bandu scheme has contributed to increased productivity, with farmers able to invest in necessary inputs for their crops. Secondly, the scheme has paved the way for rural capitalism, with absentee landlords investing in land and increasing productivity. Though it has a drawback. The agricultural workers and crop sharecroppers have not benefited significantly from tenancy legislation.
This scheme has a remarkable impact on the rural economy. The Zamindari's abolition weakened feudalism but did not eliminate it. It helped the rise of middle-level landowners. A new class of landowners emerged, replacing the old-style

landed gentry. Further, the scheme, Rythu Bandhu has increased farmers' income, with nearly 46% of respondents earning Rs. 31,000 to 60,000 annually. Despite the positive side of the scheme, it has a few challenges and limitations. These include poor implementation, which has limited the effectiveness of agricultural reforms. Majority small scale formers still have been relaying and depending on informal loans. Due to this, they have been pushing into the mud of debts, so it is necessary to implement this scheme with a great motto to reach the sick and small-scale farmers. The studies of the above researchers' work have revealed that the Rythu Bandhu scheme has positively impacted Telangana's agrarian structure and rural economy, increasing productivity and farmers' income. However, challenges persist, and further reforms are needed to address these issues.

The unexplored one more farmer welfare scheme is Rythu Bima (14 August 2018). Telangana's agricultural sector has undergone significant transformations, shaped by historical factors and recent reforms. The Rythu Bima scheme, launched to provide financial support to farmers, has had a notable impact on the state's agrarian structure and rural economy.The main intention of this scheme is to bring cultivators into direct contact with the government, reducing exploitation. However, loopholes allowed large landowners to retain significant holdings. The Land Ceiling Act has helped and imposed restrictions on individuals' holding of land. It helped to reduce inequality, but varying levels and exemptions led to ineffective implementation. The tenancy legislation has helped regulate land rents and provided security of tenure, but poor implementation and inherent weaknesses have limited effectiveness.

The government of Telangana has launched the Rythu Bima scheme keeping the following objectives in view: to support the farmers financially in times of calamities, so the Rythu Bima provides insurance coverage to farmers, aiming to provide financial security to their families in case of death. It impacts farmers, since the scheme's primary concern is the farmer, so it has positively impacted farmers, providing financial security and reducing debt burden. Besides, it has an impact on the agrarian structure. The agricultural reforms have contributed to increased productivity, with farmers able to invest in necessary inputs for their crops. The reforms have paved the way for rural capitalism, with absentee landlords investing in land and increasing productivity, which also impacts the rural economy. The Rythu Bima scheme has increased farmers' income, providing financial security to their families. It has been helping to reduce the debt burden on farmers, improving their overall well-being.

The Rythu Bima scheme also has challenges and limitations, such as poor implementation and limited coverage. Loopholes and poor implementation have limited the effectiveness of agricultural reforms, and the scheme may not cover all farmers, particularly those in marginalized sections. The scheme has positively impacted Telangana's agrarian structure and rural economy, providing financial security to farmers and increasing productivity. However, challenges persist, and further reforms are needed to address these issues.

CONCLUSION

This research paper concludes that historical factors have shaped agricultural reforms in modern Telangana. It has included the abolition of intermediaries and land ceilings. It has a lasting impact on the state’s agrarian structure and rural economy. The farmer welfare schemes, Rythu Bandhu and Rythu Bima, have positively impacted farmers. It has been revealed from the analysis of the results that the yield in the form of increasing productivity has increased the farmer's annual income, and the family security has also been positively impacted. Even a few challenges prevail, which include the poor implementation of reforms, limited coverage, and farmers relying on untrusted and informal loans. Its improvement is essential to address these challenges and build on the successes of existing reforms. It gives the farmers of Telangana the chance to promote sustainable agricultural development, improve farmers' livelihoods, and achieve long-term economic growth, which supports the state in all fields of the nation.

Major Findings

- The historical factors have shaped Telangana's agricultural reforms.
- Rythu Bandhu and Rythu Bima schemes have positively impacted farmers.
- Though challenges persist, including poor implementation and limited coverage.
- Addressing these challenges is crucial for sustainable agricultural development.

From these conclusions and the findings, it is highlighted that improving the agricultural sector in Telangana needs continuous efforts.

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